

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: EAID, MASS, VS

SUBJECT: REPLY TO KENNEDY LETTER ON INDOCHINA

REF: SAIGON 4164

FOR AMBASSADOR

THERE FOLLOWS TEXT OF RESPONSES TO KENNEDY'S NINE POINTS
WHICH POUCHED TO YOU MARCH 27:

BEGIN TEXT.

1) "THE GENERAL CHARACTER AND OBJECTIVES OF AMERICAN POLICY TOWARDS INDOCHINA AS A WHOLE AND TOWARDS EACH GOVERNMENT OR POLITICAL AUTHORITY IN THE AREA;"

THERE ARE TWO BASIC THEMES IN OUR POLICY TOWARD INDOCHINA. THE FIRST IS OUR BELIEF THAT A SECURE PEACE IN INDOCHINA IS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN OUR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE A WORLD-WIDE STRUCTURE OF PEACE. CONVERSELY, WE BELIEVE THAT AN EVOLUTION TOWARD PEACE IN OTHER TROUBLED AREAS HELPS BRING ABOUT THE STABILITY FOR WHICH WE STRIVE IN INDOCHINA. CONSEQUENTLY, OUR INDOCHINA POLICY HAS BEEN GEARED TO BRING ABOUT THE CONDITIONS WHICH WILL ENABLE THE CONTENDING PARTIES TO FIND A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THEIR DIFFERENCES.

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OTHER THAN PEACEFUL MEANS. FOR EXAMPLE, NORTH VIET-NAM MIGHT SEEK TO CONQUER SOUTH VIET-NAM BY FORCE OF ARMS. SUCH A RESOLUTION, HOWEVER, WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY BE A TEMPORARY ONE AND WOULD NOT PRODUCE THE LONG-TERM AND STABLE PEACE WHICH IS ESSENTIAL. THEREFORE, A COROLLARY TO OUR SEARCH FOR PEACE, AND THE SECOND THEME OF OUR POLICY, IS TO DISCOURAGE THE TAKEOVER OF THE VARIOUS PARTS OF INDOCHINA BY FORCE. FORCIBLE CONQUEST IS NOT ONLY REPUGNANT TO AMERICAN TRADITIONS BUT ALSO HAS SERIOUS DESTABILIZING EFFECTS WHICH ARE NOT LIMITED TO THE AREA UNDER IMMEDIATE THREAT.

WE WOULD STRESS THE POINT THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS NO DESIRE TO SEE ANY PARTICULAR FORM OF GOVERNMENT OR SOCIAL SYSTEM IN THE INDOCHINA COUNTRIES. WHAT WE DO HOPE TO SEE IS A FREE CHOICE BY THE PEOPLE OF INDOCHINA AS TO THE GOVERNMENTS AND SYSTEMS UNDER WHICH THEY WILL LIVE. TO THAT END WE HAVE DEVOTED IMMENSE HUMAN AND MATERIAL RESOURCES TO ASSIST THEM IN PROTECTING THIS RIGHT OF CHOICE.

OUR OBJECTIVE WITH REGARD TO THE GOVERNMENT OF VIET-NAM, THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KHMER REPUBLIC AND THE ROYAL LAO GOVERNMENT IS TO PROVIDE THEM WITH THE MATERIAL ASSISTANCE AND POLITICAL ENCOURAGEMENT WHICH THEY NEED IN DETERMINING THEIR OWN FUTURES AND IN HELPING TO CREATE CONDITIONS WHICH WILL PERMIT FREE DECISIONS. IN LAOS, HAPPILY, REAL PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE, PARTLY BECAUSE OF OUR ASSISTANCE. THE VIENTIANE AGREEMENT AND PROTOCOLS GIVE CLEAR EVIDENCE OF THE POSSIBILITY FOR THE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OUR POLICIES ARE DESIGNED TO FOSTER. WE HAVE SUPPORTED THE ROYAL LAO GOVERNMENT AND, WHEN IT IS FORMED, WE WILL LOOK WITH GREAT SYMPATHY ON THE GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNION. WE WELCOME A PEACEFUL AND NEUTRAL LAOS AND, WHERE APPROPRIATE, WE WILL CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE THE PARTIES TO WORK OUT THEIR REMAINING PROBLEMS.

IN CAMBODIA WE ARE CONVINCED THAT LONG-TERM PROSPECTS FOR STABILITY WOULD BE ENHANCED BY A CEASE-FIRE AND A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT AMONG THE KHMER ELEMENTS TO THE CONFLICT. BECAUSE SUCH STABILITY IS IN OUR INTERESTS WE ARE UNCLASSIFIED

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PROVIDING DIPLOMATIC AND MATERIAL SUPPORT TO THE LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT OF THE KHMER REPUBLIC, BOTH IN ITS SELF-DEFENSE EFFORTS AND IN ITS SEARCH FOR A POLITICAL SOLUTION TO THE WAR.

OUR OBJECTIVE IN VIET-NAM CONTINUES TO BE TO HELP STRENGTHEN THE CONDITIONS WHICH MADE POSSIBLE THE PARIS

AGREEMENT ON ENDING THW WAR AND RESTORING PEACE IN VIET-NAM. WITH THIS IN MIND WE HAVE SUPPORTED THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM WITH BOTH MILITARY AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. WE BELIEVE THAT BY PROVIDING THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT THE NECESSARY MEANS TO DEFEND ITSELF AND TO DEVELOP A VIABLE ECONOMY, THE GOVERNMENT IN HANOI WILL CONCLUDE THAT POLITICAL SOLUTIONS ARE MUCH PREFERABLE TO RENEWED USE OF MAJOR MILITARY FORCE. THE PRESENCE OF LARGE NUMBERS OF NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS IN THE SOUTH DEMONSTRATES THAT THE MILITARY THREAT FROM HANOI IS STILL VERY MUCH IN EVIDENCE. BECAUSE OF THAT THREAT WE MUST STILL ENSURE THAT THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM HAS THE MEANS TO PROTECT ITS INDEPENDENCE. WE NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT THE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE IS MARKEDLY LESS THAN IT WAS PRIOR TO THE CEASE-FIRE AND BELIEVE THAT OUR POLICY OF SUPPORT FOR SOUTH VIET-NAM HAS BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN DETERRING MAJOR NORTH VIETNAMESE OFFENSIVES.

OUR OBJECTIVE WITH REGARD TO THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM, AND ITS SOUTHERN ARM, THE PROVISIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT, IS TO ENCOURAGE FULL COMPLIANCE WITH THE PARIS AGREEMENT. WE HAVE BEEN DISAPPOINTED BY NORTH VIET-NAM'S SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF IMPORTANT PROVISIONS OF THE AGREEMENT. HOWEVER, WE STILL BELIEVE THAT THE AGREEMENT PROVIDES A WORKABLE FRAMEWORK FOR A PEACEFUL AND LASTING SETTLEMENT, AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO USE ALL MEANS AVAILABLE TO US TO SUPPORT THE CEASE-FIRE AND TO ENCOURAGE CLOSER OBSERVANCE OF IT. OUR FUTURE RELATIONS WITH HANOI OBVIOUSLY DEPEND IN LARGE PART ON HOW FAITHFULLY NORTH VIET-NAM COMPLIES WITH THE AGREEMENT.

2) "THE GENERAL CONTENT AND NATURE OF EXISTING OBLIGATIONS AND COMMITMENTS TO THE GOVERNMENTS IN SAIGON, PHNOM UNCLASSIFIED

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PENH AND VIENTIANE;"

THE U. S. HAS NO BILATERAL WRITTEN COMMITMENT TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM. HOWEVER, AS A SIGNATOR OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT ON ENDING THE WAR AND RESTORING PEACE IN VIET-NAM, THE UNITED STATES COMMITTED ITSELF TO STRENGTHENING THE CONDITIONS WHICH MADE T
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